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menz insana

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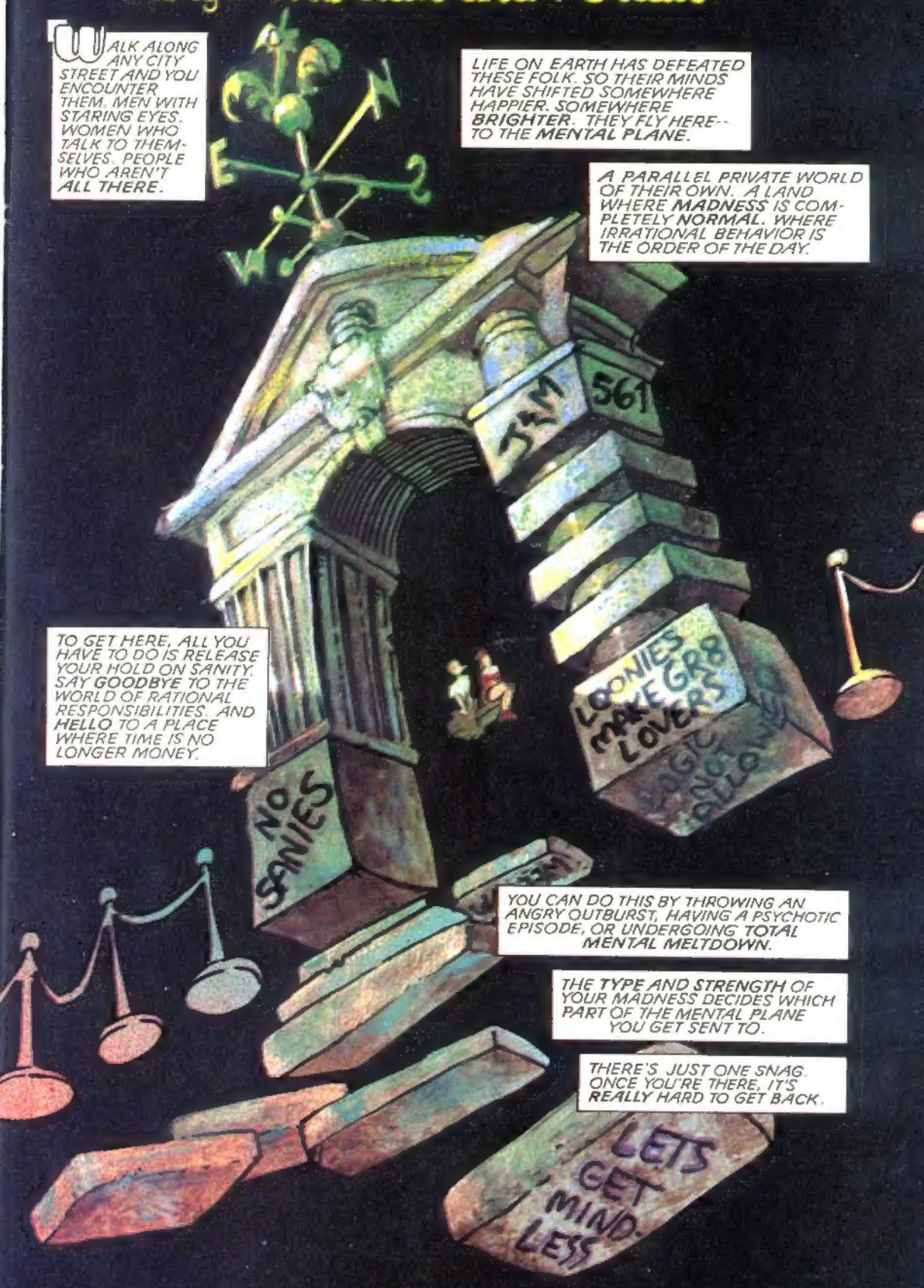
Story 1: Mortals and Portals


WALK ALONG ANY CITY STREET AND YOU ENCOUNTER THEM. MEN WITH STARING EYES. WOMEN WHO TALK TO THEMSELVES. PEOPLE WHO AREN'T ALL THERE.
LIFE ON EARTH HAS DEFEATED THESE FOLK. SO THEIR MINDS HAVE SHIFTED SOMEWHERE HAPPIER. SOMEWHERE BRIGHTER. THEY FLY HERE-- TO THE MENTAL PLANE.
A PARALLEL PRIVATE WORLD OF THEIR OWN. A LAND WHERE MADNESS IS COMPLETELY NORMAL. WHERE IRRATIONAL BEHAVIOR IS THE ORDER OF THE DAY.
TO GET HERE, ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS RELEASE YOUR HOLD ON SANITY. SAY GOODBYE TO THE WORLD OF RATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES. AND HELLO TO A PLACE WHERE TIME IS NO LONGER MONEY.
YOU CAN DO THIS BY THROWING AN ANGRY OUTBURST, HAVING A PSYCHOTIC EPISODE, OR UNDERGOING TOTAL MENTAL MELTDOWN.
THE TYPE AND STRENGTH OF YOUR MADNESS DECIDES WHICH PART OF THE MENTAL PLANE YOU GET SENT TO.
THERE'S JUST ONE SNAG. ONCE YOU'RE THERE, IT'S REALLY HARD TO GET BACK.
7 & M
561
LOONIES MAKE GR8 LOVERS
NO SANITY
LETS GET MIND-LESS

Tales FROM THE Mental Plane

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MENZ INSANA is created by FOWLER and BOLTON

OH LOOK, A COMET. THAT'S THE IDEA-- BLAZE BRIEFLY AND BURN AWAY. LEAVE A BRIGHT SCAR ACROSS THE SKY.
NOT FOR THE LIKES OF US, MENZ. WE'RE STUCK HERE FOREVER. UNLESS OUR BODIES ON EARTH RECOVER THEIR SANITY, AND THERE'S NOT MUCH CHANCE OF THAT.

MENZ HAS BEEN A GUEST OF THE MENTAL PLANE FOR SO LONG THAT HE IS DETERMINED NOT TO RECALL HIS FORMER SANE LIFE. HE IS A VERITABLE **FOREIGN LEGION OF FORGETFULNESS.**

ON A GOOD DAY JAZ SEEMS ALMOST NORMAL. BUT TRY AS SHE MIGHT, SHE CANNOT REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED TO DRIVE HER HERE AND **STRIP** THE COGS FROM THE **GEARBOX** OF HER MIND.

CAN YOU BELIEVE THE TIME?
YOUR WATCH HAS NO HANDS, MENZ.
IT WAS A RHETORICAL QUESTION.
IT'S THE WAITING I HATE.
YOU CAN'T RUSH THESE THINGS. ROME WASN'T BUILT IN A FRIDGE.
Boner running on... Empty
NOBODY TRIES TO GET BACK TO EARTH EXCEPT US.
THAT'S THEIR LOSS. PERSONALLY, I LIKE VISITING THE SANE. I JUST HATE THEIR CLOTHES.
THE ONLY WAY OF RETURNING TO REALITY IS VIA A SHIFTING RIFT CALLED THE PORTAL. NOBODY KNOWS EXACTLY WHEN OR WHERE THE PORTAL WILL STRIKE, BUT MENZ HAS A GOOD IDEA...
CAN'T WE STAY A LITTLE LONGER THIS TIME?
THE PORTAL ONLY EVER STAYS OPEN FOR AN HOUR. YOU HAVE LIPSTICK ON YOUR TEETH.
CAN YOU REMEMBER A TIME WHEN YOU WERE SANE?
VAGUELY. I ATE A LOT OF TAKE-OUT FOOD AND IT WAS ALWAYS RAINING. AT LEAST THE MEALS ARE BETTER HERE. SEE IF THE PORTAL'S COMING, WILL YOU?

YOU WERE RIGHT. IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S ALMOST HERE.
WHAT'S IN YOUR BAG? NOT MORE LEAFLETS?
THERE'S NO POINT IN HANDING THESE OUT. NOBODY LISTENS DOWN THERE. "HUG A LUNATIC TODAY." FORGET IT. THEY'RE NOT INTERESTED.
THEY'RE ALL TOO BUSY *RELATING* TO ONE ANOTHER. BEING NORMAL. PARDON MY LOBOTOMY, BUT I THOUGHT WE CAME HERE TO *ESCAPE* THAT.
AT LEAST WE CAN BE NICE TO THEM.
WHY SHOULD WE BE? YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT PEOPLE LIKE US, DON'T YOU? WE'RE TWO FLUTES SHORT OF AN ORCHESTRA. WE'VE MISSED OUR EXIT ON THE REALITY FREEWAY. IS THAT ANY WAY TO SPEAK OF THE *CLINICALLY INSANE?*
MAYBE NOT. BUT YOU'VE STILL GOT A BODY DOWN THERE.
GREAT. A MERE SHELL, STRAPPED DOWN AND SHUT AWAY IN SOME MAXIMUM SECURITY ASYLUM. IF MY MIND HADN'T TAKEN A VACATION I'D HAVE GONE *NUTS.*
WE SHOULD GO VISIT IT SOMEDAY. TAKE IT SOME *GRAPES.*

I ALWAYS MEANT TO ASK.
WHAT DID YOU DO TO GET LOCKED AWAY LIKE THAT?
SOMETHING SNAPPED AND I WAS VERY BAD. YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW. DID YOU BRING ANYTHING TO EAT FOR THE JOURNEY?
LUMPY CARROT RETURNING SOUP AND DRY CHEESE HEAVES.
DRY CHEESE HEAVES
Mmmmm, MY FAVORITES! THE PORTAL'S HERE. BRACE YOURSELF.

THIS IS A GREAT WAY TO TRAVEL IF YOU ENJOY PAINFUL RECTAL ITCHING.

I CAN'T BELIEVE WE MADE IT BACK.
LOOK, JAZ. DAYGLO DOODADS AND KNICK-KNACKS. DESIGNER WATER. BLUEBERRY FLAVORED INTIMATE DEODORANTS. IT'S *SHOPPING MADNESS.*
DO YOU THINK THEY'LL NOTICE THAT WE'RE DIFFERENT?
YOU'RE JOKING. WE'RE GOING TO FIT IN *PERFECTLY.*

LISTEN, MENZ, INSTEAD OF SHOPPING WE SHOULD FIND OUT WHERE YOUR BODY IS. MAYBE WE COULD SET IT FREE.
I'D RATHER NOT, IF IT'S ALL THE SAME TO YOU.
THE BRITANNIA HOME FOR WAYWARD MENTALITIES... HERE WE ARE.
IT'S IN HACKNEY MARSH. IT'LL TAKE US AN *HOUR* TO GET THERE! WE'RE SUBJECT TO EARTH RULES NOW.
GOODNESS! WHATEVER YOU DID MUST HAVE BEEN *REALLY* BAD TO GET YOU PUT AWAY IN HERE.
WE'VE ONLY FIVE MINUTES LEFT BEFORE THE PORTAL CLOSES. WE DEMAND TO SEE -- MENZ, WHAT WAS YOUR NAME ON EARTH?
THEY WON'T LET YOU IN.

ZWAPPPPPPPP!
DRIVEN BY THE NATURAL FORCES THAT KEEP SANITY AND REALITY APART, THE PORTAL STRIKES, DRAWING THEM BACK TO THE MENTAL PLANE.
TOO LATE-- TIME'S UP!
WHUMP!
I SO WANTED TO SEE WHO YOU WERE. WON'T WE EVER GET BACK TO REALITY?
JAZ, BEING WITH YOU IS A LOT MORE FUN THAN BEING SANE.
Oh, MENZ!

Story 2: Let's Get Normal
ON THE INSANE PLANE THE MAD ARE TRULY LIBERATED. . BECAUSE THE POWER OF A FREE MIND HAS NO LIMIT
Oh, DARK LORD, SPANK ME WITH YOUR CHAINSAW
DON'T BOTHER, DARK LORD SHE DOESN'T LOVE YOU. SHE'S AN ACTRESS TRYING TO FURTHER HER CAREER
WHAT'S A THREE-LETTER WORD BEGINNING WITH M AND ENDING WITH D?
LOBSTER THERMIDOR
YOU'RE BORED, AREN'T YOU?
NO, I LOVE SITTING HERE STARING AT WHERE THE WALLS WOULD BE IF WE HAD ANY IT'S JUST LIKE A SUNDAY AFTERNOON BACK ON EARTH

AND IT'S *RAINING* WE COULD TRY THE PORTAL AGAIN
NO, THANK YOU. I'D LIKE TO KEEP MY STOMACH CONTENTS *THIS* SIDE OF MY *SPHINCTER* IF YOU DON'T MIND
AREN'T YOU EVEN *SLIGHTLY* INTERESTED IN GETTING YOUR MIND BACK INSIDE YOUR BODY?
LOOK, EVEN IF I COULD, IT'S LOCKED UP IN SOLITARY. YOU HAVE TO PEER THROUGH A *GRILLE* TO EVEN SEE IT. THE LEATHER RESTRAINTS ARE QUITE NICE, THOUGH

I KNOW LET'S PLAY CARDS
YOU HAVEN'T GOT A FULL DECK *
YOU CAN SAY *THAT* AGAIN
* *SPANNERS & HAMMERS IS THE FAVORED CARD GAME OF THE MENTAL PLANE*
WE COULD WATCH THE SHOPPING CHANNEL
THEY NEVER DEMONSTRATE WHAT I WANT TO BUY
GOOD DOG, THERE MUST BE SOME BETTER WAY OF PASSING THE TIME. WE'RE FREE OF THE SHACKLES OF SANITY
WE CAN DO *WHATEVER* WE WANT WHAT DO OTHER MENTALLY ILL PEOPLE DO?
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BUY?
GOATS FOR EXPERI-MENTS.
Oh
THEY GO TO VEGAS AND WATCH ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER SHOWS
THEATRE OF *MENTAL CRUELTY*, eh? I KNOW! LET'S HAVE SOMEONE OVER FOR DRINKS.
ALL RIGHT, BUT NO POPES, ROCK STARS OR WAR CRIMINALS REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED WHEN YOU INVITED *JIM MORRISON* OVER?
NO, WHAT HAPPENED?
YOU TOLD HIM *'C'MON BABY LIGHT MY FIRE'* HAD BECOME AN *EASY-LISTENING STANDARD* AND HE TRIED TO SAW YOUR HEAD OFF WITH A *LAWN KING TRIMMER*

JAZ, THIS IS Mr. -- DO YOU HAVE A NAME?
COWHEAD
Mr COWHEAD FROM NEXT DOOR WELL, FROM WHERE NEXT DOOR WOULD BE IF WE HAD ANY DOORS
DO SIT DOWN Mr COWHEAD
TRY ONE OF MY HOMEMADE CRUSTY NOSE-DROPS
SO WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?
I'VE GOT SPLINTERS IN THE WINDMILLS OF MY MIND
HAVEN'T WE ALL? TAKE JAZ HERE SHE MAY LOOK NORMAL BUT THERE AREN'T MANY MENTAL HANGERS IN HER CLOSET
BOTTOMS UP.

THASS THE TROUBLE WITH THIS WORLD YOU HAVE A FEW DRINKS WITH THE BOYS PERFORM A FEW CATTLE MUTILATIONS. AND SUDDENLY THEY WANT TO LOCK YOU UP.
ONE MORE OF THESE AND I'LL BE OUT OF MY HEAD.
SLURP
SANE PEOPLE ARE ALL THE SAME THEY'VE GOT NO SPINE NO GUTS NOT LIKE US IT TAKES GUTS TO BE NUTS.
AN ATTRACTIVE WOMAN LIKE YOU PROB'LY GOES FOR SOMEONE LIKE ME.. I'VE GOT SPINE. I'VE GOT GUTS.
YOU'VE GOT A COW'S HEAD.
MENZ, HE'S HORRIBLE - CAN'T YOU MIX HIM ONE OF YOUR KILLER COCKTAILS?
FWOM!
ACID
DO NOT DRINK

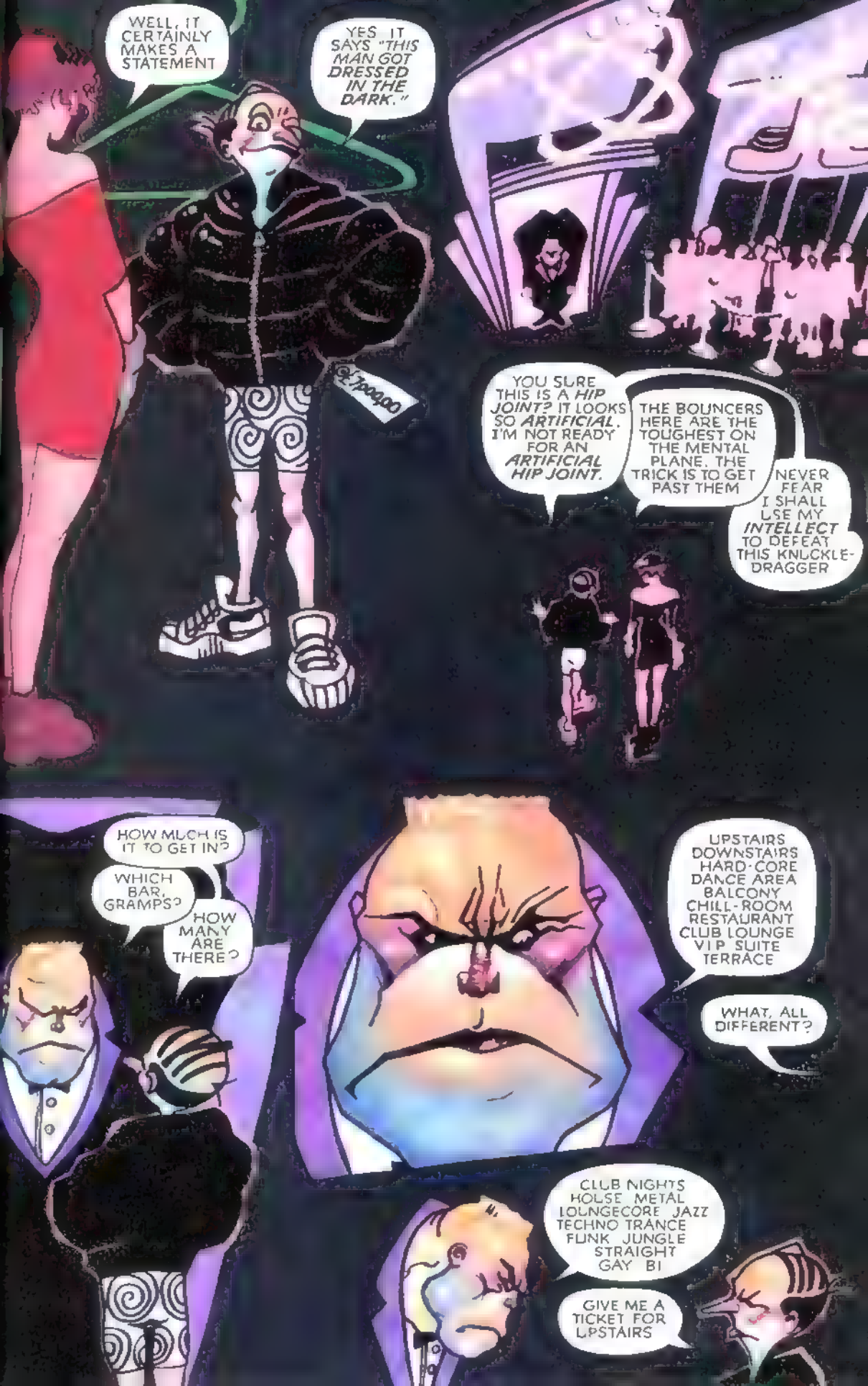
TRY THIS BABY ON FOR SIZE
THIS TASTES OF PETROLEUM BYPRODUCTS AND FRIED FISH. IT'S CERTAINLY PRUNING BACK MY TASTEBUDS
THBBP!
OOPS
EXCUSE ME SOMETHING I ATE.
FLORT!
PHROOAAPBT!

HE REALLY DID HAVE A LOT OF SPINE AND GUTS
LATER.
I DIDN'T THINK WE'D EVER GET HIM OUT OF THE HOUSE
I HOPE WE CAN GET HIM OUT OF THE CARPET WHERE DID YOU FIND THAT MARTINI RECIPE?
IN A MANUAL ON UNBLOCKING VICTORIAN TOILETS

I FEEL BAD ABOUT LOSING ANOTHER NEIGHBOR
DON'T PART OF HIM WILL ALWAYS BE WITH US PROBABLY DOWN THE BACK OF THE SOFA
IT'S LIKE MY MOTHER USED TO SAY NEVER TRUST A MAN WHOSE *EYES* AREN'T ON THE FRONT OF HIS *FACE*.
I KNEW YOU PREFERRED BEING ALONE WITH ME
THEN YOU'RE HAPPY?
I'D RATHER BE BORED WITH YOU THAN INTERESTED WITH SOMEONE ELSE
HAPPINESS IS *REALITY* IN MY *REARVIEW MIRROR*
Oh, *MENZ*

Bring Out
Sins City
YOU DON'T
I DO
NO, YOU DON'T
YES, I DO.
FRONT LOBES
NO, YOU DON'T
YES, I - WAIT A MINUTE, I FORGOT WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT
YOU SAID YOU LOOKED YOUR AGE AND I SAID YOU DIDN'T
IT'S ALL RIGHT FOR YOU YOUR MIND DIED WHILE YOU WERE STILL YOUNG AND GORGEOUS MINE WENT AWAY AT 42
THAT'S NOT OLD
NOT IF YOU'RE A TORTOISE A PARROT OR A PAINTING IN MUSIC INDUSTRY YEARS I'M 175.
JOAN CRAWFORD'S FINAL MOVIES ARE AGE NG BETTER THAN ME
YES, BUT A MAN OF YOUR AGE--
A MAN OF MY AGE IS GANDHI.
HAIR WORLD
THEN DO WHAT I DO GET F.T GET A MAKEOVER HERE

FEELING BETTER, MENZ?
BETTER THAN WHAT?
I DON'T LOOK ANY DIFFERENT
IT WOULD HELP IF SIR'S PORES WEREN'T LARGE ENOUGH TO GROW BEANS IN
EXER-PSYCHO
I REFUSE TO JOG AT MY AGE TOO MANY DANGLY BITS IT'S UNDIGNIFIED
THEN JUST BUY THE CLOTHES
I'VE SEEN BETTER DRESSED WOUNDS
THIS LOOK IS COMING BACK
WHY? WHERE'S IT BEEN?

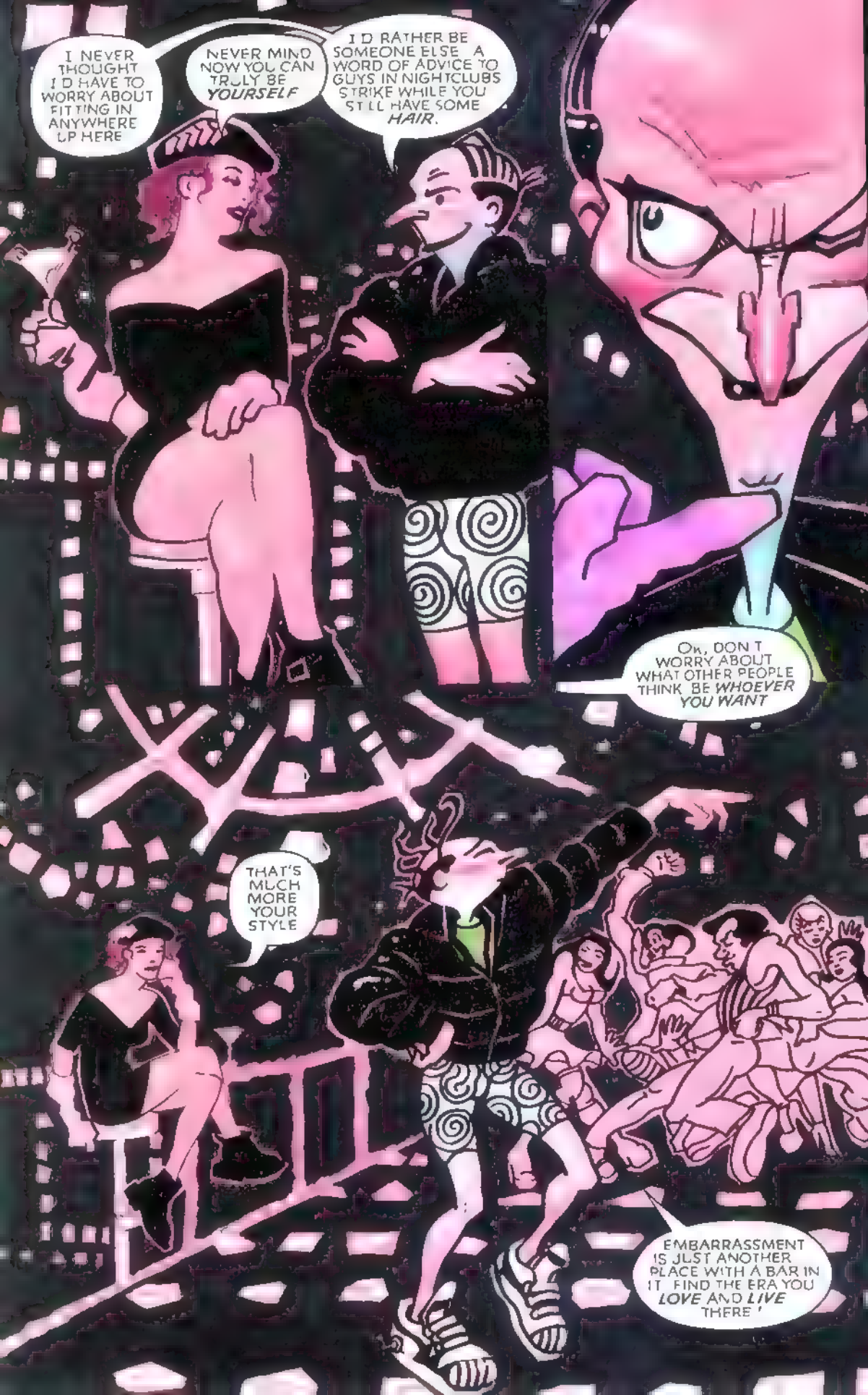

WELL, IT CERTAINLY MAKES A STATEMENT
YES IT SAYS "THIS MAN GOT DRESSED IN THE DARK."
Tpoqoo
YOU SURE THIS IS A HIP JOINT? IT LOOKS SO ARTIFICIAL. I'M NOT READY FOR AN ARTIFICIAL HIP JOINT.
THE BOUNCERS HERE ARE THE TOUGHEST ON THE MENTAL PLANE. THE TRICK IS TO GET PAST THEM
NEVER FEAR I SHALL USE MY INTELLECT TO DEFEAT THIS KNUCKLE-DRAGGER
HOW MUCH IS IT TO GET IN?
WHICH BAR, GRAMPS?
HOW MANY ARE THERE?
UPSTAIRS DOWNSTAIRS HARD-CORE DANCE AREA BALCONY CHILL-ROOM RESTAURANT CLUB LOUNGE VIP SUITE TERRACE
WHAT, ALL DIFFERENT?
CLUB NIGHTS HOUSE METAL LOUNGECORE JAZZ TECHNO TRANCE FUNK JUNGLE STRAIGHT GAY BI
GIVE ME A TICKET FOR UPSTAIRS

UPSTAIRS IS *RUBBER* TONIGHT YOU GOT ANY?
NO
LATEX? PVC? PADDED VINYL? NYLON? LEATHER? PLASTIC? SPANDEX?
NO. IT MAKES YOU *SWEAT* WHAT'S DOWN STAIRS?
FORTY-NINE FIFTY
THAT'S A LOT
IT INCLUDES THE PRICE OF HAVING YOUR NIPPLES PIERCED
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SAY THIS BUT THERE MUST BE SOMETHING MORE *NORMAL*
GARAGE
I LIKE GARAGE MUSIC
NO, IT'S JUST A GARAGE. FULL OF CROSS-DRESSERS TONIGHT
YOU MEAN ANGRY
NO, *TRANSVESTITES*. I GET MUDDLED UP TOO IT'S LIKE STALACTITES AND THE ONES THAT COME UP FROM THE GROUND YOU'RE NOT A TRANSVESTITE
NO

THE LOUNGE BAR WOULD BE NICER FOR YOU BUT NOT THIS WEEKEND THERE'S A LOT OF MALE BONDING GOING ON.
HOW CLOSE?
REAL CLOSE
I SEE
I CAN'T LET YOU IN ANYWAY
WHY NOT?
THE PLACE IS FULL UP
YOU LET THOSE ATTRACTIVE HALF-NAKED GIRLS IN
THEY'RE MEMBERS
AND THAT GUY WEARING JUMPER CABLES AROUND HIS NECK
HE PROMISED NOT TO START ANYTHING
HOW MUCH IS IT TO BE A MEMBER?
MEMBERSHIP'S CLOSED. DO YOU HAVE A GUEST PASS?
FORTY-EIGHT HOURS' NOTICE
WHAT DO I HAVE TO GIVE YOU FOR ONE OF THOSE?
I COULD MAKE TROUBLE FOR YOU
THAT'S GOOD WE LOVE TROUBLE OUR EVENINGS ARE INCOMPLETE WITHOUT A GOOD PUNCH-UP

MENZ TRIES ANOTHER APPROACH
YOU, SIR, HAVE THE SHIFTY LOOK OF A DRUG DEALER ABOUT YOU
HELP YOURSELF Es AND WHIZZ BOMBERS DOVES DOWNERS PURPLE SCREAMERS HEEBIE JEEBIES NIGHTCRAWLERS B. E POISON B. ACK DEATH LUNG CRUSHERS AND I TH.NK THAT ONE S A COUGH DROP
THEY SOUND AWFUL
I DUNNO IT DOES YOU GOOD TO GET OUT AND HAVE FUN OCCASIONALLY I'M PROVIDING A SERVICE.
WHAT S THE WORST ONE?
THEY GIVE THESE TO INJURED SOLDIERS JUST BEFORE THEY HAVE AMPUTATIONS.

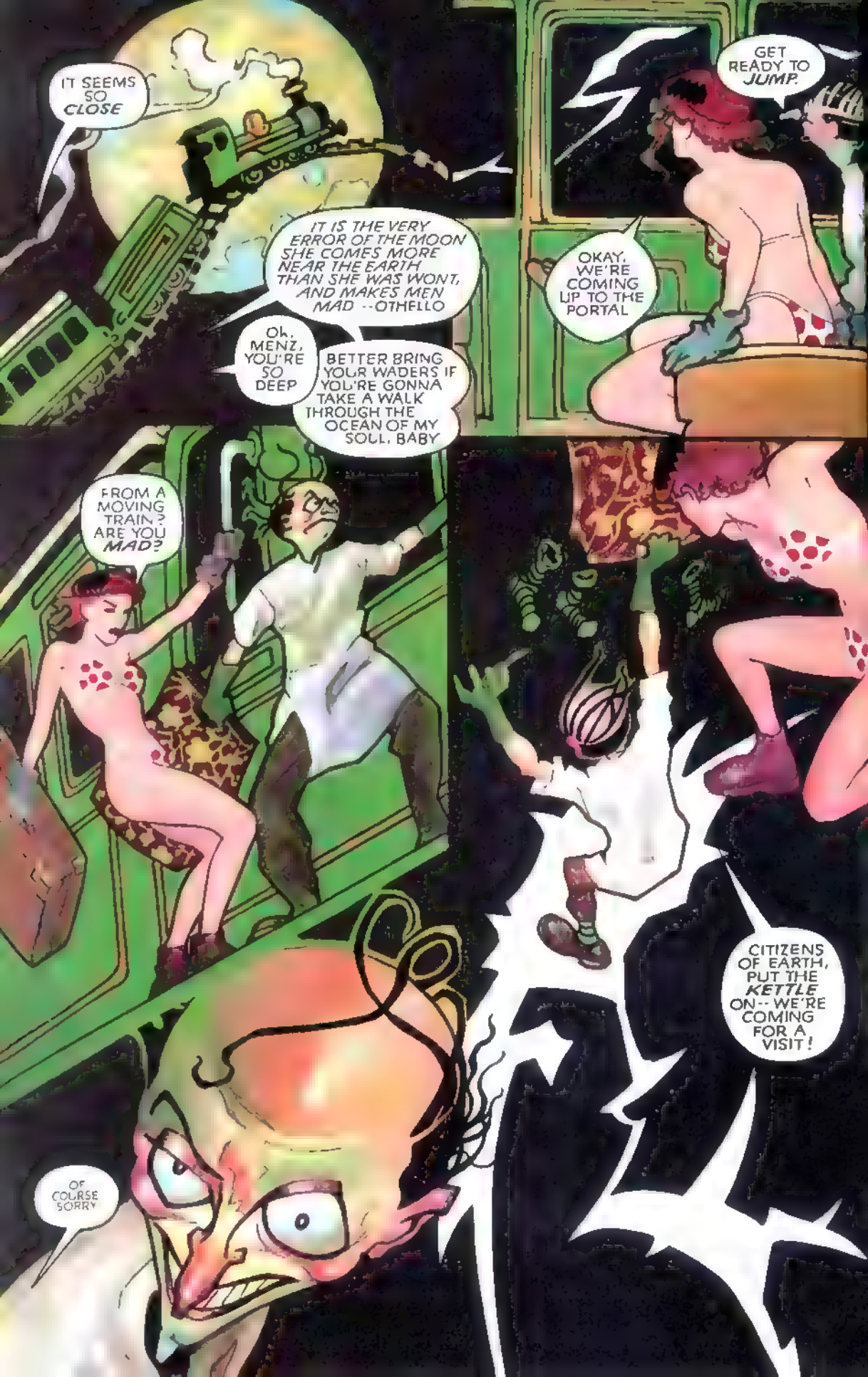
HOW MUCH?
TWO BUCKS I MIX IT WITH SOMETHING FROM MY *SHED* AND PASS THE SAVINGS ON TO YOU
DON'T MESS WITH DRUGS KIDS THEY DO YOUR *HEAD* IN
MENZ YOU MADE IT!
I DID BUT THE *DOORMAN* MAY NOT PULL THROUGH


I NEVER THOUGHT I'D HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT FITTING IN ANYWHERE UP HERE
NEVER MIND NOW YOU CAN TRULY BE *YOURSELF*
I'D RATHER BE SOMEONE ELSE A WORD OF ADVICE TO GUYS IN NIGHTCLUBS STRIKE WHILE YOU STILL HAVE SOME *HAIR*.
OH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THINK BE *WHOEVER YOU WANT*
THAT'S MUCH MORE YOUR STYLE
EMBARRASSMENT IS JUST ANOTHER PLACE WITH A BAR IN IT FIND THE ERA YOU *LOVE* AND *LIVE* THERE!

Story 4: Trains, Boats & Insane Planes
IT ONLY HAPPENS WHEN THE SKY DARKENS AND THE WIND RISES AND THE WEATHERVANES START TO SPIN. ONLY EVER THEN
FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, A RIFT APPEARS IN THE MENTAL PLANE THROUGH THIS PORTAL, THE MENTALLY ILL CAN BE GRANTED A RETURN TO EARTH-- FOR SIXTY MINUTES ONLY
BUT DUE TO TEMPORARILY DISTURBED WEATHER PATTERNS, THE PORTAL IS SHIFTING, RIPPLING ACROSS THE MENTAL PLANE AT GREAT SPEED. NO ONE IN HIS RIGHT MIND WOULD ATTEMPT TO CATCH UP WITH IT TODAY
WHERE'S MY BUCKET AND SPADE?
I PACKED IT NEXT TO THE TELEVISION BEHIND THE CAT UNDER THE LAMP-SHADES.

SO WHY ARE WE TAKING SEVEN LAMPSHADES LABELLED THE DAYS OF THE WEEK?
SO THAT WE KNOW WHICH ONE IS FOR WHICH DAY, OF COURSE
AND THIS?
WHERE WE'RE GOING, THERE MAY BE GERMS
BIG ONES
NOW, I RECKON, WE CAN INTERCEPT THE PORTAL AT POINT B, HERE, JUST BEFORE IT REACHES THE CHASM OF INFINITE DESPAIR. WE'RE HERE, POINT Q.
WE BOARD THE TRAIN AT POINT L, HERE
CLEAR?

WHEN DOES THE TRAIN LEAVE?
ANY MINUTE NOW.
THIS SCHEDULE WAS PRINTED IN 1865
THEN WE'LL HAVE TO HURRY
BRING THE BLACKBOARD I MAY NEED TO MAKE FURTHER DIAGRAMS
YOU RE OFF THE RAILS
HEY, IF I NEED SOMEONE TO WEIGH MY BAGGAGE, I'LL WHISTLE
WHAT DID YOU EXPECT?
TRAVEL BROADENS THE BUTT
WILL WE OVERTAKE THE PORTAL THIS SIDE OF THE MOON?


IT SEEMS SO CLOSE
IT IS THE VERY ERROR OF THE MOON SHE COMES MORE NEAR THE EARTH THAN SHE WAS WONT, AND MAKES MEN MAD --OTHELLO
Oh, MENZ, YOU'RE SO DEEP
BETTER BRING YOUR WADERS IF YOU'RE GONNA TAKE A WALK THROUGH THE OCEAN OF MY SOUL, BABY
GET READY TO JUMP.
OKAY. WE'RE COMING UP TO THE PORTAL
FROM A MOVING TRAIN? ARE YOU MAD?
CITIZENS OF EARTH, PUT THE KETTLE ON-- WE'RE COMING FOR A VISIT!
OF COURSE SORRY

HOW COULD WE MISS ANYTHING SO BIG?
HEY! TAXI!
FOLLOW THAT PORTAL, AND DON'T SPARE THE- uh--
TAXI
--ANTPOWER.
THAT'S RIGHT, I READ SOMEWHERE THAT OUR BRAINS ARE THIRTY TIMES THE SIZE OF OUR HEADS.
RELAX, MENZ ANTS ARE VERY INTELLIGENT HE'LL GET US THERE
MENTAL NEWS
PLEASED TO MEET YOU COMPONOTUS CARPENTER ANT IF YOU HAVE ANY SHELVES YOU NEED PUTTING UP, I'M YOUR ANT I CAN LIFT UP TO TWICE MY OWN WEIGHT
THAT'S NOT MUCH
I'VE BEEN SICK.

THAT'S IT UP AHEAD PULL OVER
NO, THAT'S A CARDIGAN, SURELY
I THOUGHT YOU SAID ANTS WERE *INTELLIGENT?*
YOU'VE MISSED IT!
YOU TRY CONTROLLING A HEAVY MOTOR VEHICLE WITH SIX BENDY LEGS AND A JOINTED THORAX
YOU'RE A DISGRACE TO THE ANT WORLD
OH YEAH? WAIT UNTIL YOU NEED FERRYING ACROSS A RIVER ON A *LEAF*, MATE
ONLY ONE WAY TO CATCH THE PORTAL NOW, FLY

CUSTOMS
DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO DECLARE? WHAT ARE THOSE?
GOATS FOR EXPERI-MENTS.
I'M GOING TO HAVE TO GIVE YOU A FULL BODY SEARCH, MISS
WHOA. THIS THING NEEDS ADJUSTING
BE CAREFUL. I'M LIKE SOUTH AMERICA PARTS OF ME ARE *VERY HOT* AND NOT *FULLY EXPLORED.*
THAT DAMNED X-RAY MACHINE MAGNETIZED ME.
I HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS FLIGHT *BUDDY HOLLY* IS SEATED UP FRONT

SEE ANYTHING YOU WANT, SIR?
HONEY, I HAVE UNDERWEAR OLDER THAN YOU TAKE ME TO THE CAPTAIN.
F.B.
THE PORTAL S RIGHT BELOW US MENZ
I DESERVE EXTRA AIR MILES FOR THIS
MENZ AND HIS LOVER SURVIVE THE PORTAL TO ARRIVE ON EARTH
ACCORDING TO MY COMPASS WE'VE REACHED THE BRITTANIA HOME FOR WAYWARD MENTALITIES. IT'S DIRECTLY ABOVE US
YOU MEAN WE'RE LOCKED IN A SEWER?
I GOT US HERE, DIDN'T I?
WE'RE GONNA BE STUCK HERE FOR AN HOUR HAPPY VACATION BABY
I WOULDN'T SWIM IF I WERE YOU
Oh MENZ!
PLAT

Story 5: On The Level
MENZ, WE MAY NEVER GET BACK TO EARTH LONG ENOUGH TO FREE YOUR BODY
FINE BY ME IT CAN ROT AWAY IN THE BRITTANIA FORGET ABOUT THE PORTAL
BESIDES, WE'VE NEVER FLLLY EXPLORED OUR OWN HOME
WHAT'S TO EXPLORE? DO YOU REALLY WANT TO HANG OUT WITH SOCIETY'S MISFITS?
WHY NOT? WE'RE ALL BROTHERS AND SISTERS
EVEN THE ONES WHO ARE MARRIED TO EACH OTHER
DON'T YOU AT LEAST WANT TO SEE THEIR FURNITURE?
JAZ RESPONDS TO A MAN WHO CAN MAKE HER LAUGH SHE AGREES TO GO EXPLORING WITH MENZ.
JAZ I KNOW YOU'RE NOT HAPPY ABOUT LOSING YOUR MIND BUT WE'RE STILL THE SANEST PEOPLE HERE
LOOK I'M WEIGHING MYSELF AGAINST THE BRAIN OF THE MOST EMINENTLY SENSIBLE MAN WHO EVER LIVED
Hmm
PERHAPS I SHOULD TAKE MY SHOES OFF FIRST
ACCORDING TO THIS THERE ARE SEVEN LEVELS TO THE MENTAL PLANE
UR HERE
STARTING W TH OCCASIONALLY UNSTABLE AND ENDING W.TH "I'VE URINATED IN MY GRAPENUTS, VICAR"
U SHOULD B HERE!

C'MON IN NAME S DANNY DOWNER BE GLAD TO SHOW YA AROUND!
I remember reading about him In 1953 he went crazy and cut the cables to the Empire State Building elevators while they were full of tourists
WELCOME TO LEVEL ONE! THE MINDSLAVES LIVE HERE MOST ARE FROM EARTH'S HARDY WORKFORCE THEY TOILED AWAY IN DULL JOBS UNTIL THE DAY THEY REALIZED THEY'D NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHING!
BUT THEY'RE STILL SLAVING NOW
FORCE OF HABIT THE BOAT GOES NOWHERE IT'S CHAINED UP
PLEASE WIPE YOUR FEET
THAT WAS ME, JAZ, PUSHING A PEN IN MY CHEMIST'S SHOP UNTIL THE ELASTIC OF MY MIND PERISHED AFTER ONE TOO MANY BRAIN-WASHES
HOLD TIGHT GOING DOWN!

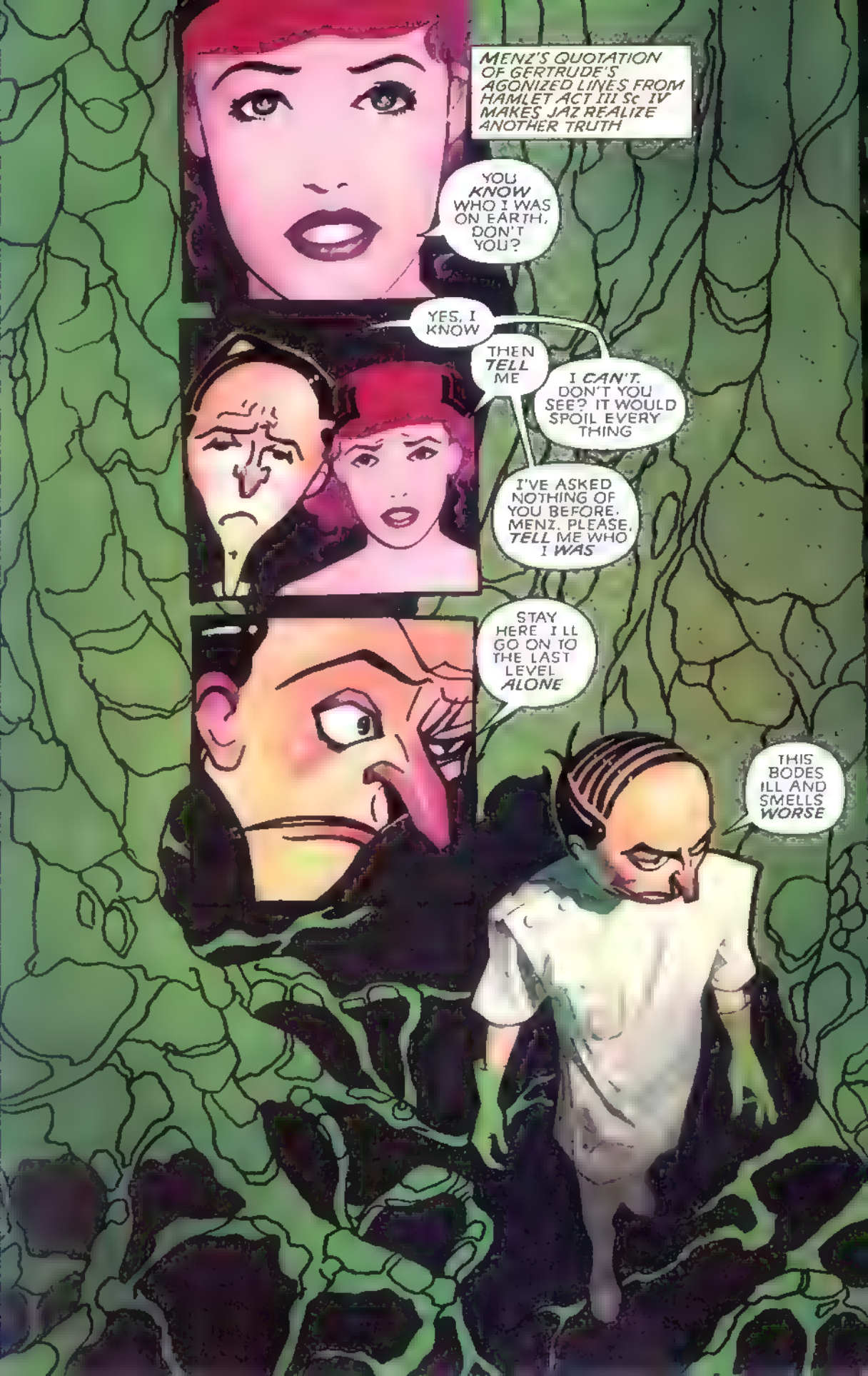
SAD, AIN'T IT?
THEY'RE ALL IN LIMBO ON *LEVEL TWO,* THE LAND OF THE LOST MISSING BUTTONS IN THE MENTAL SPIN-DRYER
THEY DON'T EVEN KNOW THEIR MINDS HAVE DRIFTED INTO A *CEREBRAL SUBURBIA*... IT'S AN EASY PLACE TO ARRIVE AT
I GUESS A LOT OF MARRIAGES END UP HERE
BUT IF YOU THINK *THAT'S* SAD, TAKE A LOOK AT *LEVEL THREE,* SNAP CITY
THIS LEVEL'S RESERVED FOR THE SNAPPERS-- THE QUIET ONES WHO SUDDENLY EXPLODE
LOVING HOUSEWIVES WHO ONE DAY POUR *GROUND GLASS* IN THEIR HUSBANDS *BEER*
THE *NERDY* POSTAL WORKERS WHO TURN *SCHIZO.*

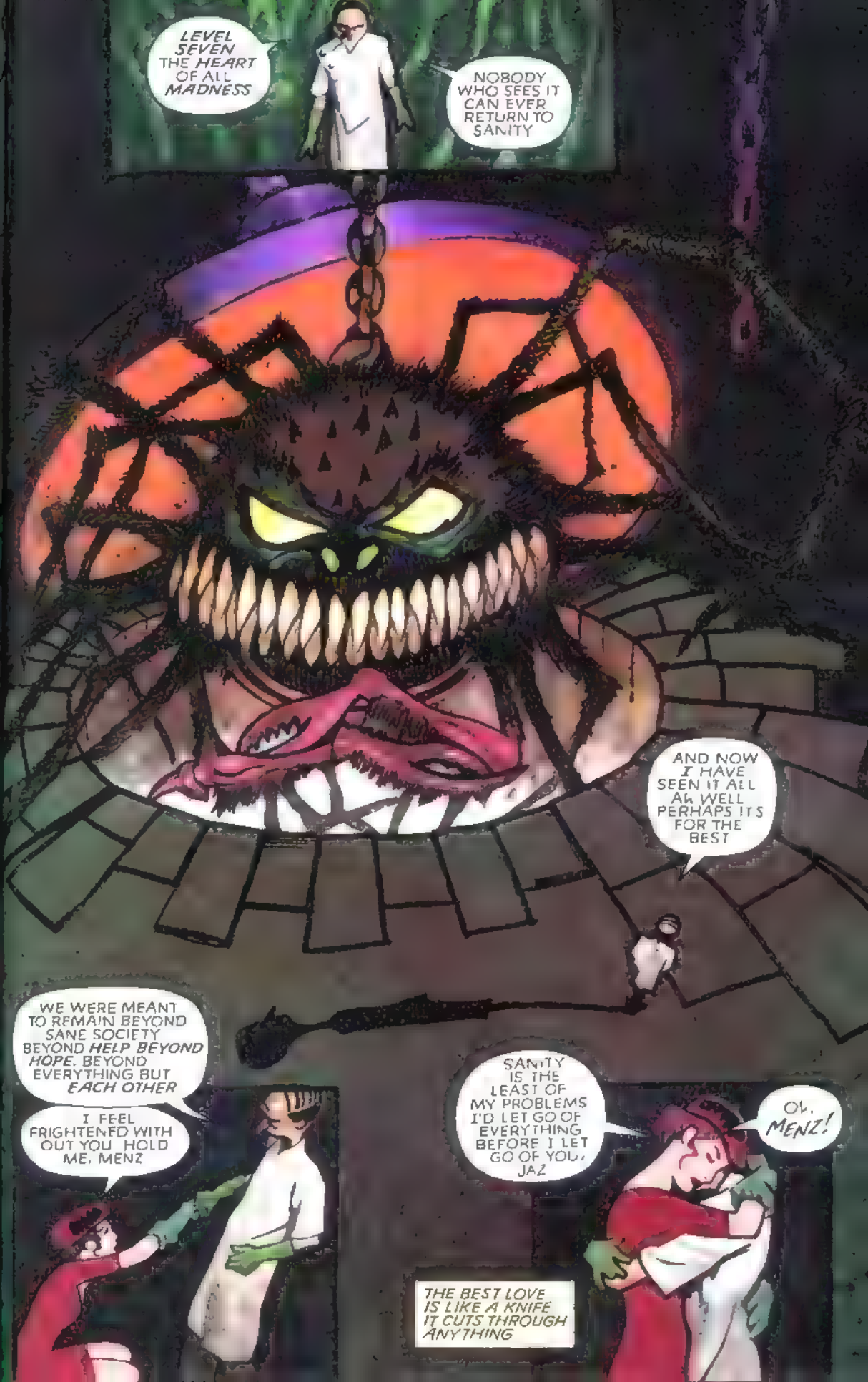
THIS IS DRIPS THE INSIDE OUT MAN HE WANTED HIS LIFE TO TURN OUT FINE INSTEAD HE TURNED OUT
I MAY LOOK DISGUSTING, BUT I'M OKAY ON THE INSIDE
AND THIS IS THE GREAT VENTRICLE A GREAT VENTRILOQUIST WHOSE HEART ATTACK AND MENTAL COLLAPSE TURNED HIM INTO A DUMMY
NO MORE GOTTLES O GEER GIMME A GUN!
I AIN'T TAKING YOU ANY FURTHER THAN THIS-- YOU RE ON YOUR OWN NOW!
SCARED, huh?
HERE, MY GOOD MAN
TREAT YOURSELF TO A FINE DINNER
THIS LL GET ME A MEAL WITH A MOVIE TIE-IN ON THE BOX FORGET IT

LEVEL FOUR.
I'VE HEARD OF THIS PLACE THE VALE OF TEARS.
ABOVE US, A STORM RAGES
ONLY IN THE STILL DEPTHS OF DESPAIR CAN WE TRULY BE SAFE WITH OUR SORROWS
WAIT, WHO ARE YOU?
I'm Squid Baby
Oh. HOW SWEET
On Earth I nearly drowned when I fell into a canal. They saved me, but part of my brain died in the water. Now I hold the spirits of all drowned children
Oh
I FEEL SO SAD NOW I'M NOT SURE IF WE SHOULD GO ANY FURTHER THROUGH THE LEVELS
Oh BUT WE MUST MADNESS IS ABOUT CONFRONTING YOUR WORST FEARS
I D BE HAPPIER CONFRONTING THEM WITH SEVERAL STRONG LADS AND A WHIP

ACCORDING TO THIS, LEVEL FIVE IS THE V.I.P WING CELEBRITY PSYCHOS THE SLASHERS AND STALKERS. QUITE A FEW MOVIE STARS. PLENTY OF POLITICIANS
I SAW THEIR TV-MOVIES I DON'T NEED TO VISIT THEM IN PERSON
WHEN I WAS A CHILD, THE WORLD MADE SENSE. WHAT HAPPENED? THIS PLACE IS FULL. WHERE DID WE ALL GO SO WRONG?
I GUESS FREEDOM WENT TO OUR HEADS THE NEW REALITY BECAME A PRISON.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
COULD YOU COUNT HOW MANY TIMES SOMEONE TRIED TO SELL YOU SOMETHING IN A SINGLE EARTH DAY? HOW MANY TIMES SOMEONE LIED TO YOU? USED YOU?
I REMEMBER SO LITTLE
REMEMBER HOW OFTEN SOMEONE CARED ABOUT YOU? REALLY CARED?
YOU'RE CONFUSING ME
THINK, JAZ
NO, NO LOVE-PAIN, IT HURTS--
IT HURTS TO REMEMBER, DOESN'T IT? NOW DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHY WE RETREAT INTO MADNESS? WHY YOU MUSTN'T GO BACK TO REALITY?
THEN WE MUST GO ON

LEVEL SIX. PSYCHOVILLE WE'RE BEYOND MERE SCHIZOPHRENIA NOW
THE PEOPLE HERE ARE NO LONGER REACHABLE SELF-HATRED SELF-DECEPTION. SELF-MUTILATION.
OH MY!
I CAN'T TAKE ANY MORE, MENZ I SEE TOO MUCH OF MYSELF HERE
"THOU TURN'ST MY EYES INTO MY VERY SOUL, AND THERE I SEE SUCH BLACK AND GRAINED SPOTS AS WILL NOT LEAVE THEIR TINCT"
JAZ GOES DEEPER STILL...

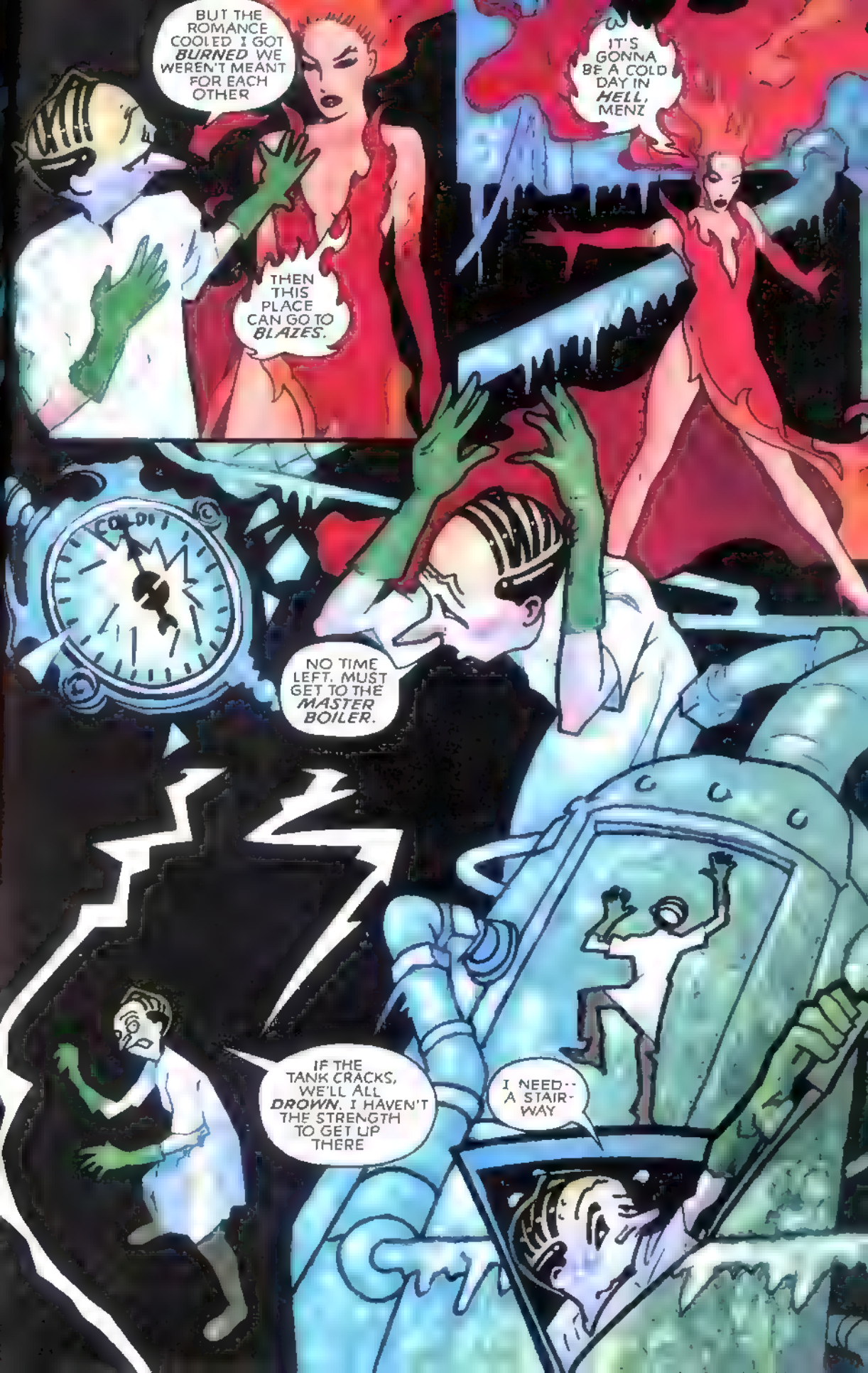

MENZ'S QUOTATION OF GERTRUDE'S AGONIZED LINES FROM HAMLET ACT III Sc IV MAKES JAZ REALIZE ANOTHER TRUTH
YOU KNOW WHO I WAS ON EARTH, DON'T YOU?
YES, I KNOW
THEN TELL ME
I CAN'T. DON'T YOU SEE? IT WOULD SPOIL EVERY THING
I'VE ASKED NOTHING OF YOU BEFORE, MENZ. PLEASE, TELL ME WHO I WAS
STAY HERE I LL GO ON TO THE LAST LEVEL ALONE
THIS BODES ILL AND SMELLS WORSE


LEVEL SEVEN THE HEART OF ALL MADNESS
NOBODY WHO SEES IT CAN EVER RETURN TO SANITY
AND NOW I HAVE SEEN IT ALL AH WELL PERHAPS ITS FOR THE BEST
WE WERE MEANT TO REMAIN BEYOND SANE SOCIETY BEYOND HELP BEYOND HOPE. BEYOND EVERYTHING BUT EACH OTHER
I FEEL FRIGHTENED WITH OUT YOU HOLD ME, MENZ
SANITY IS THE LEAST OF MY PROBLEMS I'D LET GO OF EVERYTHING BEFORE I LET GO OF YOU, JAZ
OH, MENZ!
THE BEST LOVE IS LIKE A KNIFE IT CUTS THROUGH ANYTHING

Story 6: The Snow Job
WHEN I WAS SANE I SPENT MY LIFE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING I COULD NEVER TRULY FIND. NOW I HAVE EVERY-THING I COULD POSSIBLY WANT AND LOOK AT YOU
YOU CHOSE A HOT BODY, THE EERIE POWER TO CLOUD MEN'S MINDS, AND A DATE WITH THE DERANGED MAN OF YOUR DREAMS
ALL I NEED FOR COMPLETE FULFILLMENT IS A SET OF RAZOR-SHARP STAINLESS STEEL KITCHEN KNIVES AND GOATS FOR EXPERI-MENTS
OF COURSE THERE ARE STILL A LOT OF THINGS I DON'T UNDERSTAND WOMEN, FOR INSTANCE. WHY DO THEY TAKE SO LONG GETTING OUT OF A CAR? WHEN THEY USE A PUBLIC TOILET--
--WHY MUST THEY ALWAYS DESCRIBE IT TO YOU AFTERWARDS?
AND WHAT IS THIS THING WITH BUYING SHOES?
I WAS DREAMING OF EARTH. IT WAS COLD AND BRIGHT AND DEAD, NOT AT ALL LIKE HERE WHERE IT'S ALWAYS SO WARM-AND-DARK-AND ALIVE
Oh

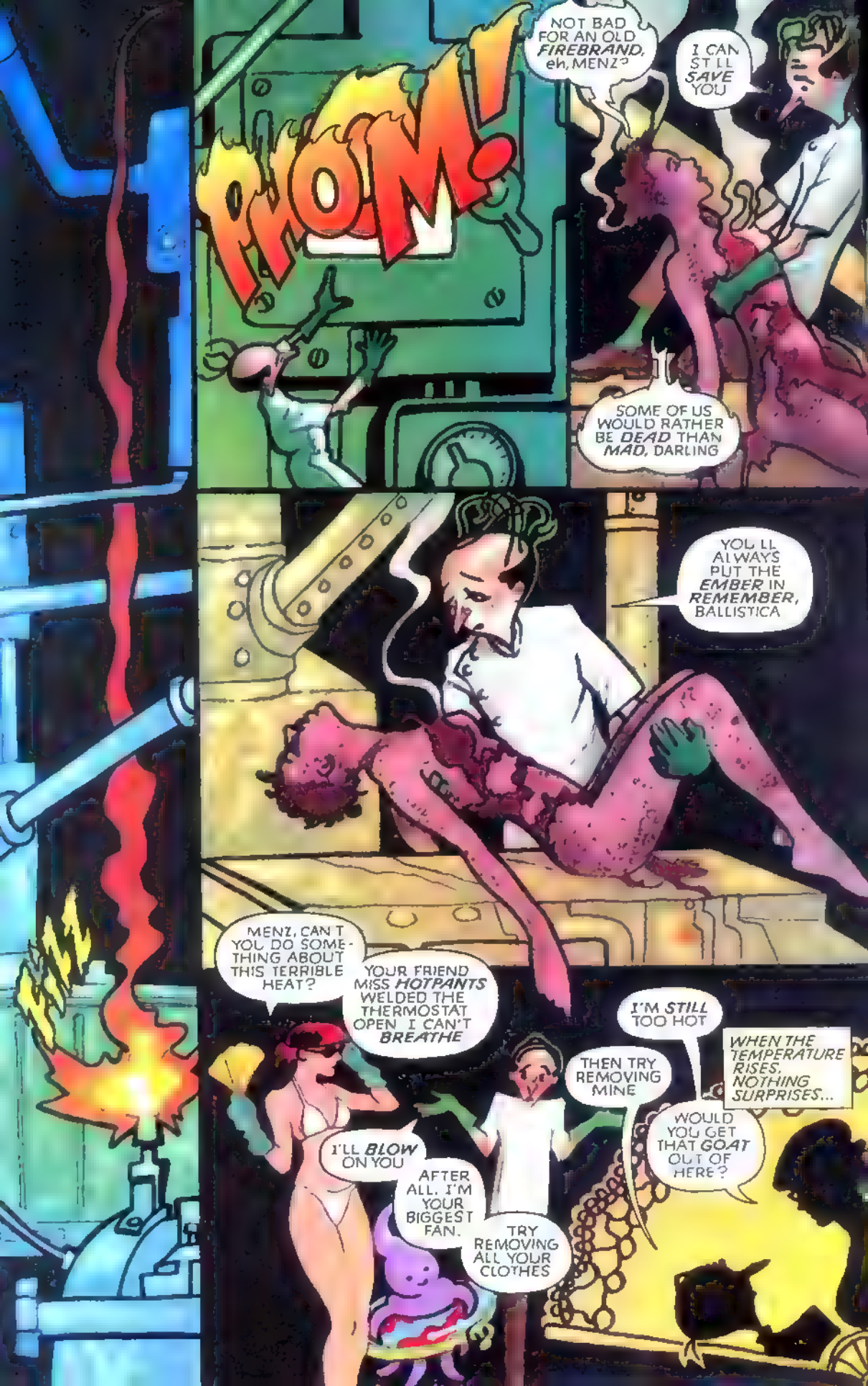
MY STARS! THE MENTAL BOILER'S NOT BEEN STOKED! THE WHOLE PLANE IS SUBZERO! WE'LL FREEZE TO DEATH!
THE MENTAL BOILER?
WE HAVE TO RELIGHT IT AT ONCE! DO YOU WANT YOUR REMAINING BRAIN-CELLS TO TURN INTO PERMA FROST?
I CAN GET INTO THE SYSTEM FROM HERE. I'LL NEED A BLOW TORCH, PLIERS, A WRENCH, AND SEVERAL PAIRS OF YOUR OLD PANTIES.
I MAY BE GONE FOR SOME TIME, IN TERRIBLE CONDITIONS. DO YOU WANT ME TO HAVE NO HAPPINESS?
WHAT DO YOU NEED THOSE FOR?
The Vale of Tears has iced over. I'm turning into frozen calamari. Can I stay with you?
OF COURSE, SQUID-BABY. YOU'D PROBABLY LIKE TO GET YOUR SUCKERS AROUND A NICE HOT CUP OF TEA
MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE MENTAL PLANE'S CENTRAL HEATING SYSTEM...
JUST AS I THOUGHT. THERE'S A PROBLEM WITH THE OLD FLAME.

BALLISTICA BRAITHWAITE. YOU WERE ALWAYS GOING OUT, EVEN WHEN I WAS DATING YOU
AND I M GOING OUT AGAIN NOW OLD FLAMES DIE IF THEY RE LEFT UNATTENDED MENZ, DON'T YOU KNOW THAT?
IF THE TEMPERATURE FALLS ANY LOWER, THE BOILER TANK WILL CRACK WIDE OPEN DON'T YOU CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO US ALL?
WHY SHOULD I? YOU DIDN'T CARE THAT I CRACKED UP WHEN YOU LEFT
OF COURSE I CARED
YOU ALWAYS KNEW HOW TO MAKE ME HOT

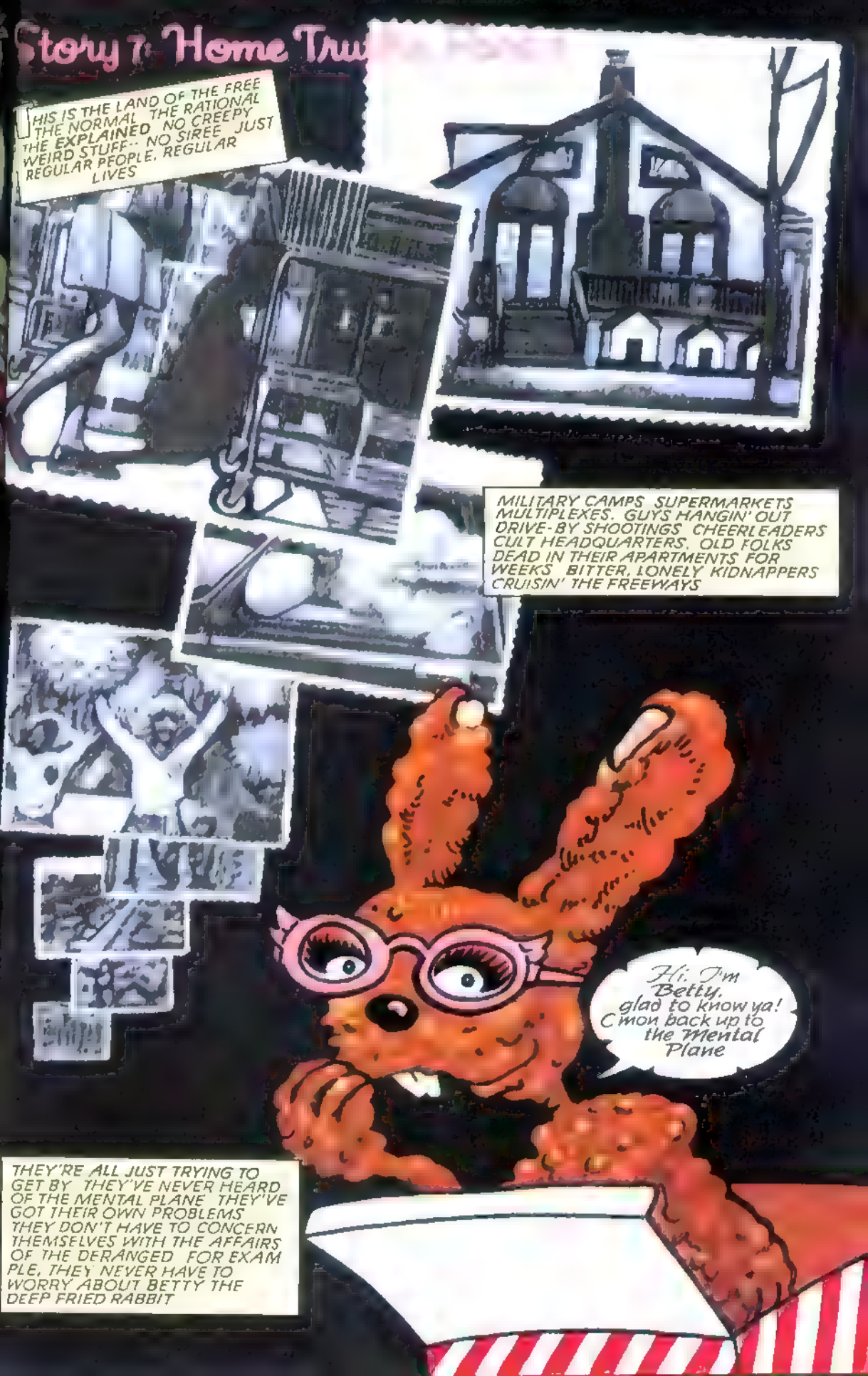

BUT THE ROMANCE COOLED I GOT *BURNED* WE WEREN'T MEANT FOR EACH OTHER
THEN THIS PLACE CAN GO TO *BLAZES*.
IT'S GONNA BE A COLD DAY IN *HELL*, MENZ
NO TIME LEFT. MUST GET TO THE *MASTER BOILER*.
IF THE TANK CRACKS, WE'LL ALL *DROWN*. I HAVEN'T THE STRENGTH TO GET UP THERE
I NEED-- A STAIR-WAY

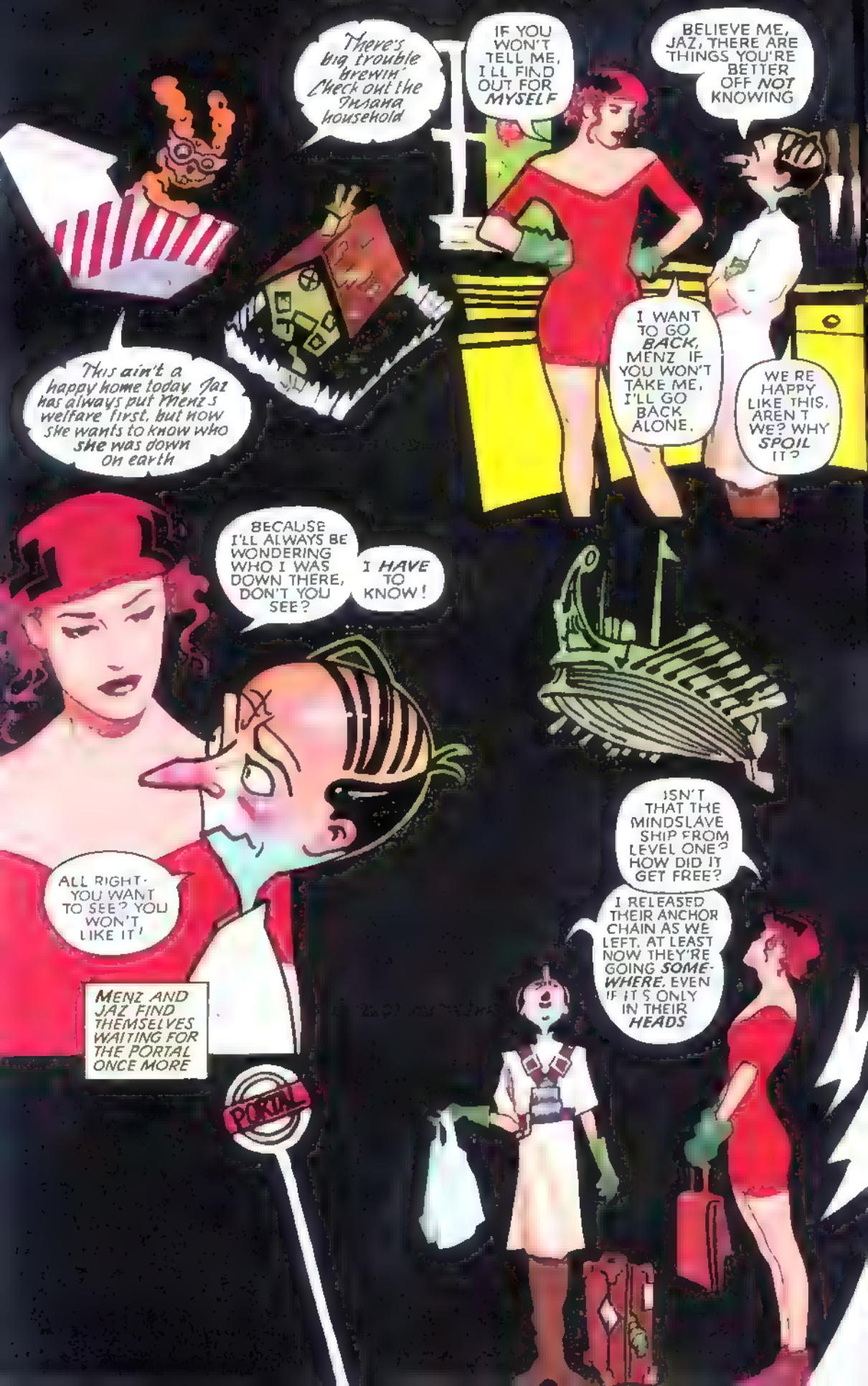
THANK GOD FOR BROADWAY.
I ALWAYS KNEW SHOWBIZ WAS THE TRUE HOME OF THE MENTALLY ILL
STAY BACK, MENZ! WHEN THIS FLAME DIES, IT'S GOING OUT WITH A BANG!

WAIT-- THAT MIGHT DO THE TRICK
ZCCCOM
AHHERGH!
FWOOSH!


PHOM!
NOT BAD FOR AN OLD FIREBRAND, eh, MENZ?
I CAN STILL SAVE YOU
SOME OF US WOULD RATHER BE DEAD THAN MAD, DARLING
YOU'LL ALWAYS PUT THE EMBER IN REMEMBER, BALLISTICA
MENZ, CAN'T YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS TERRIBLE HEAT?
YOUR FRIEND MISS HOTPANTS WELDED THE THERMOSTAT OPEN I CAN'T BREATHE
I'M STILL TOO HOT
THEN TRY REMOVING MINE
WHEN THE TEMPERATURE RISES, NOTHING SURPRISES...
WOULD YOU GET THAT GOAT OUT OF HERE?
I'LL BLOW ON YOU
AFTER ALL, I'M YOUR BIGGEST FAN.
TRY REMOVING ALL YOUR CLOTHES

Story 7: Home Tru

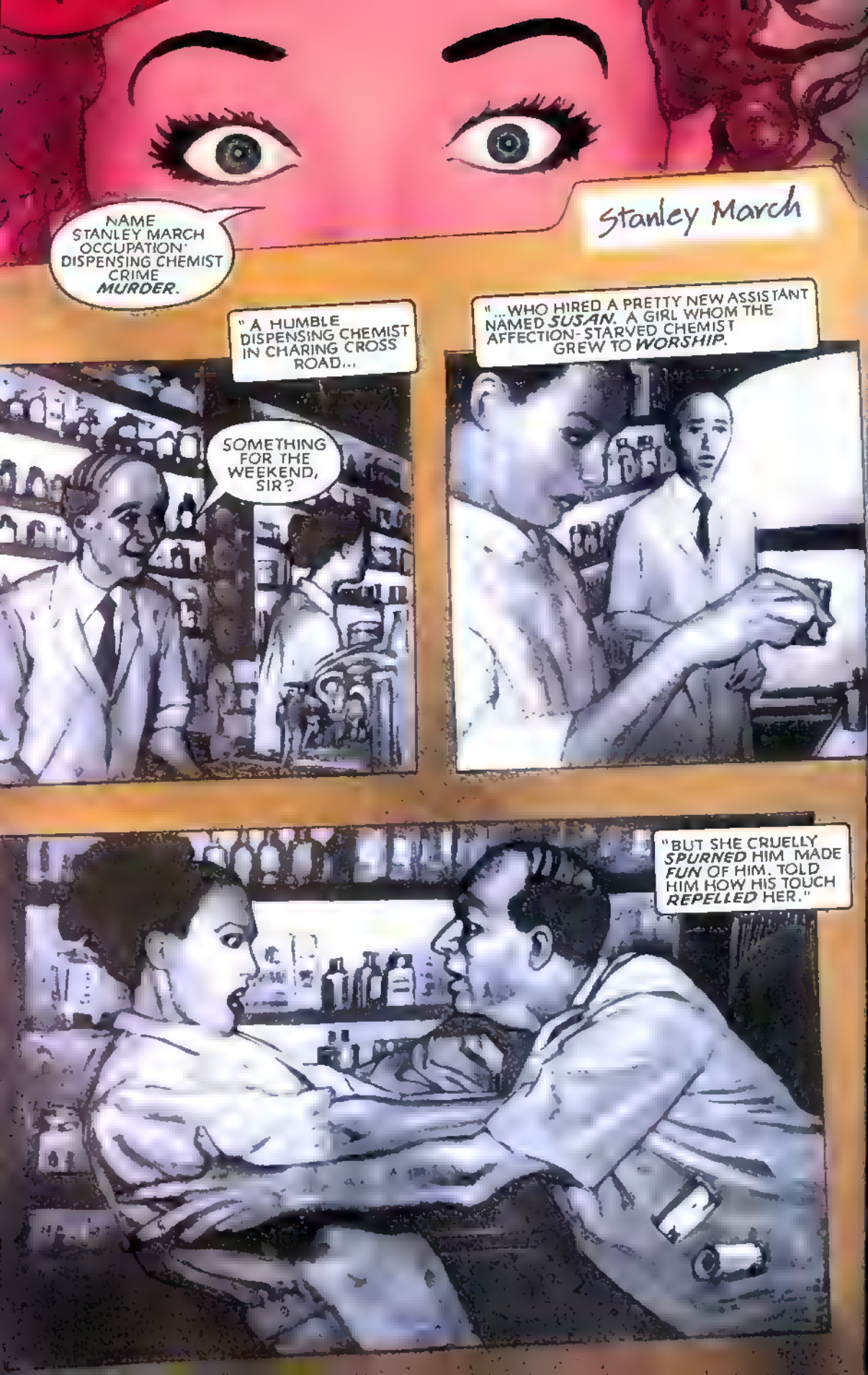

THIS IS THE LAND OF THE FREE THE NORMAL THE RATIONAL THE EXPLAINED NO CREEPY WEIRD STUFF.. NO SIREE JUST REGULAR PEOPLE, REGULAR LIVES
MILITARY CAMPS SUPERMARKETS MULTIPLEXES. GUYS HANGIN' OUT DRIVE-BY SHOOTINGS CHEERLEADERS CULT HEADQUARTERS. OLD FOLKS DEAD IN THEIR APARTMENTS FOR WEEKS BITTER, LONELY KIDNAPPERS CRUISIN' THE FREEWAYS
Hi, I'm Betty, glad to know ya! C'mon back up to the Mental Plane
THEY'RE ALL JUST TRYING TO GET BY THEY'VE NEVER HEARD OF THE MENTAL PLANE THEY'VE GOT THEIR OWN PROBLEMS THEY DON'T HAVE TO CONCERN THEMSELVES WITH THE AFFAIRS OF THE DERANGED FOR EXAM PLE, THEY NEVER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT BETTY THE DEEP FRIED RABBIT

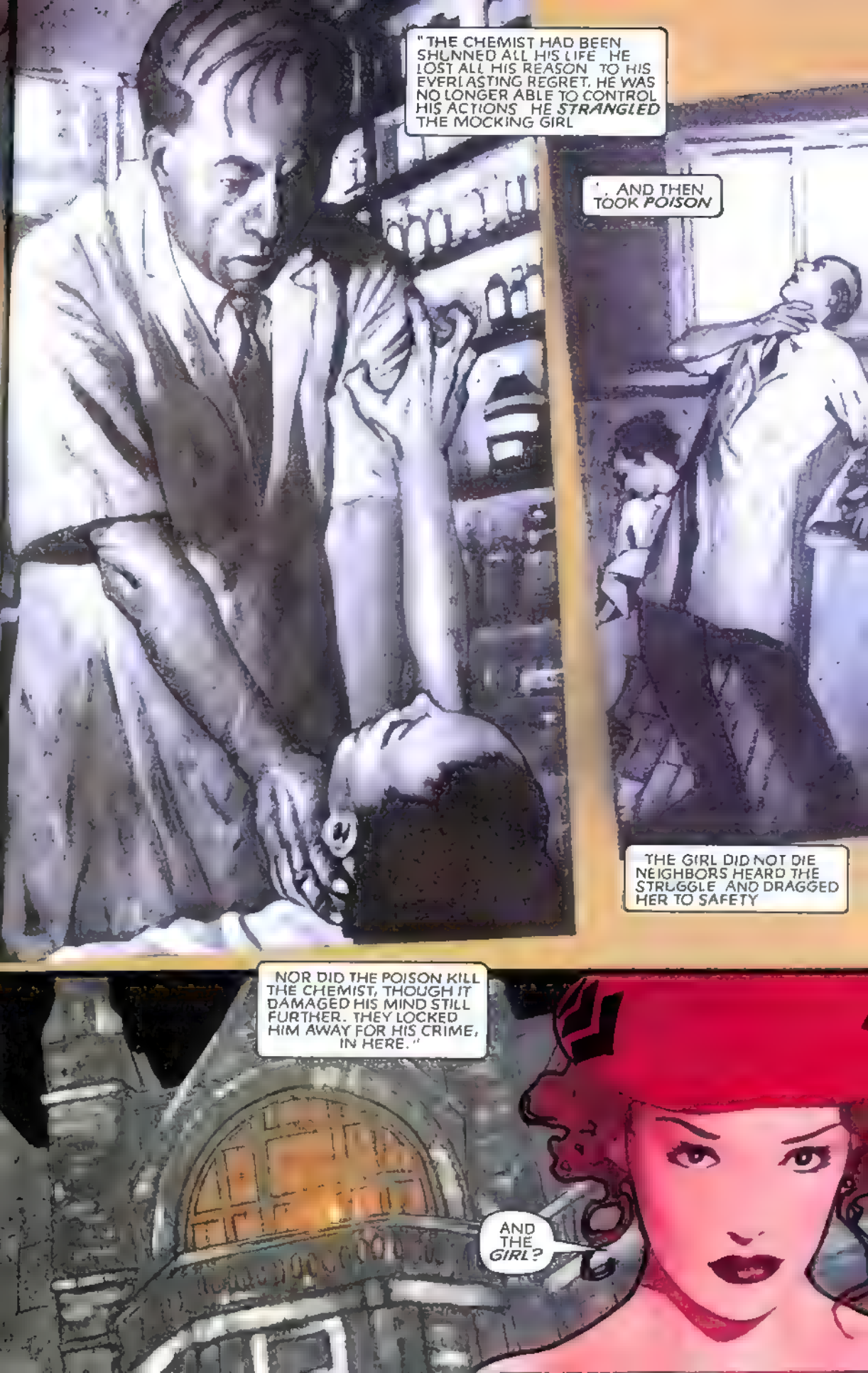

There's big trouble brewin' Check out the Iwiana household
This ain't a happy home today Jaz has always put Menz's welfare first, but now she wants to know who she was down on earth
IF YOU WON'T TELL ME, I'LL FIND OUT FOR MYSELF
BELIEVE ME, JAZ, THERE ARE THINGS YOU'RE BETTER OFF NOT KNOWING
I WANT TO GO BACK, MENZ IF YOU WON'T TAKE ME, I'LL GO BACK ALONE.
WE'RE HAPPY LIKE THIS, AREN'T WE? WHY SPOIL IT?
BECAUSE I'LL ALWAYS BE WONDERING WHO I WAS DOWN THERE, DON'T YOU SEE?
I HAVE TO KNOW!
ALL RIGHT- YOU WANT TO SEE? YOU WON'T LIKE IT!
MENZ AND JAZ FIND THEMSELVES WAITING FOR THE PORTAL ONCE MORE
PORTAL
ISN'T THAT THE MINDSLAVE SHIP FROM LEVEL ONE? HOW DID IT GET FREE?
I RELEASED THEIR ANCHOR CHAIN AS WE LEFT. AT LEAST NOW THEY'RE GOING SOMEWHERE, EVEN IF IT'S ONLY IN THEIR HEADS

THIS DIRECTIONAL FINDER I INVENTED SHOULD PLACE US RIGHT AT THE PORTAL SITE
WHY ARE WE *HERE?* THIS IS WHERE *YOUR* BODY IS KEPT, ISN'T IT?
THERE'S NO POINT IN TRYING THE OFFICIAL CHANNELS THEY DON'T ALLOW ME ANY VISITORS
HOW DO YOU *KNOW* THAT?
YOU NEVER TOLD ME
KEEP DOWN IF THE GUARDS SEE US, THEY'LL CHANGE THE SECURITY WE'LL *NEVER* GET ANOTHER CHANCE
I'VE BEEN INSIDE BEFORE

ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO GO THROUGH WITH THIS? NO MATTER HOW PAINFUL IT MIGHT BE?
WE'RE INSIDE NOW LET S GET IT OVER WITH
THIS IS WHERE THEY KEEP MY FILE
YOUR FILE? I DON'T UNDER STAND ..
YOU WANT TO KNOW WHERE YOUR BODY IS, DON T YOU?
YES, BUT--
THEN YOU NEED TO KNOW HOW I GOT HERE
GO AHEAD TAKE A LOOK AT ME

MENZ THIS IS BARBARIC! WE HAVE TO GET YOU OUT OF THERE!
READ MY FILE FIRST


NAME STANLEY MARCH OCCUPATION DISPENSING CHEMIST CRIME MURDER.
Stanley March
"A HUMBLE DISPENSING CHEMIST IN CHARING CROSS ROAD...
SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND, SIR?
"...WHO HIRED A PRETTY NEW ASSISTANT NAMED SUSAN. A GIRL WHOM THE AFFECTION-STARVED CHEMIST GREW TO WORSHIP.
"BUT SHE CRUELLY SPURNED HIM MADE FUN OF HIM, TOLD HIM HOW HIS TOUCH REPELLED HER."


"THE CHEMIST HAD BEEN SHUNNED ALL HIS LIFE. HE LOST ALL HIS REASON. TO HIS EVERLASTING REGRET, HE WAS NO LONGER ABLE TO CONTROL HIS ACTIONS. HE *STRANGLED* THE MOCKING GIRL
". . AND THEN TOOK *POISON*
THE GIRL DID NOT DIE. NEIGHBORS HEARD THE STRUGGLE AND DRAGGED HER TO SAFETY
NOR DID THE POISON KILL THE CHEMIST, THOUGH IT DAMAGED HIS MIND STILL FURTHER. THEY LOCKED HIM AWAY FOR HIS CRIME, IN HERE."
AND THE *GIRL?*

NOW HERE'S THE IRONY. SHE WAS FURIOUS THAT I STILL LIVED. THAT I HAD ESCAPED *JUSTICE* TO RESIDE IN A MERE *MENTAL* HOSPITAL
FOR THE BRIEFEST OF MOMENTS, THE ATTEMPT ON HER LIFE STOPPED THE AIR TO HER BRAIN. THE SUSAN I KNEW AND LOVED DIED WHEN I PLACED MY HANDS AROUND HER THROAT.
THE MORTAL SHELL THAT WAS LEFT BECAME OBSESSED WITH REVENGE
SHE WAS MEDICALLY TRAINED. SHE BECAME A NURSE. SHE BECAME *MY* NURSE
NOW SHE GUARDS ME DAY AND NIGHT. AS MUCH AN INMATE AS A GUARDIAN.
IT'S *YOU*, JAZ. YOU ARE MY TORMENTOR AND I AM YOUR *MURDERER*
OH MY GOD!

Story 8: Home Truths, Part 2

MADNESS EXISTS BESIDE SANITY IN UNEASY SYMBIOSIS. HOW OFTEN ARE MADMEN SPOKEN OF AS PERFECTLY NORMAL BY THEIR NEIGHBORS? EVEN SO, BYSTANDERS WOULD FIND IT HARD TO EXPLAIN THE DRAMA UNFOLDING WITHIN THE WALLS OF THIS CONDEMNED, HALF-CLOSED MENTAL HOME

AS JAZ AND MENZ CONFRONT THEIR CORPOREAL COUNTERPARTS...

I THOUGHT I'D BE PRETTY

YOU KNEW! ALL THIS TIME YOU *KNEW*.

I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO BE *HURT*, MY DEAREST..

HOW COULD I *NOT* BE HURT?

TO DISCOVER THAT THE MAN WHOSE MIND I LOVE IS BEING *TORTURED* BY ME ON EARTH?

OH, STOP WHINING! THIS IS THE MAN WHO *ENDED* YOUR NORMAL LIFE!

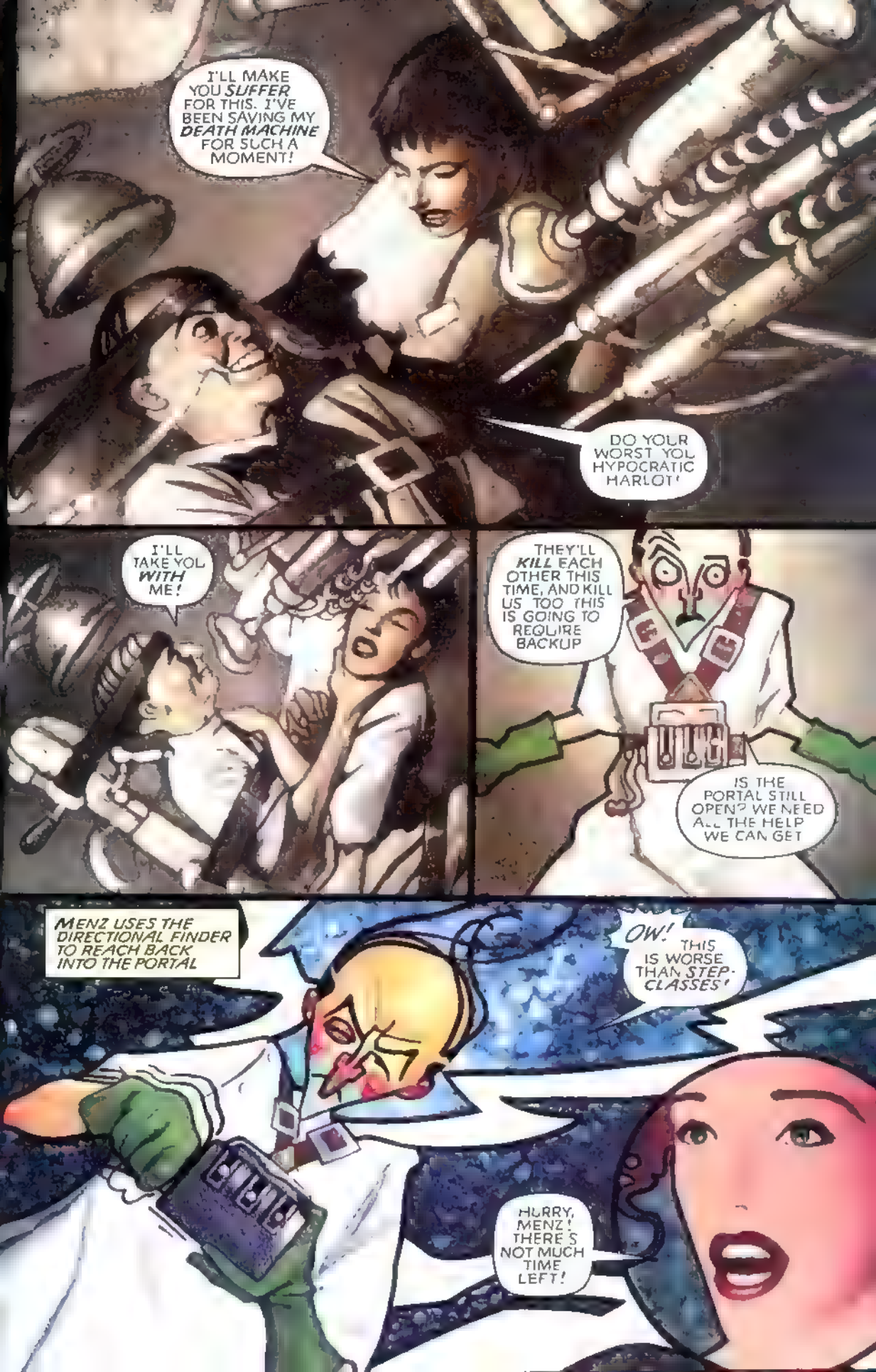
THE COURTS ALLOWED HIM TO ESCAPE INTO THE *HOSPITAL*, BUT I WASN'T PREPARED TO LET HIM OFF *THAT* EASILY

HE DESERVES EVERYTHING I CAN DEVISE TO *HURT* HIM

SHE'S QUITE *MAD*, YOU KNOW. SHE JABS ME WITH NEEDLES AND DOSES ME WITH POISON

MY DAYS AND NIGHTS ARE FILLED WITH INFINITE AGONIES. SHE DESERVES TO BE LOCKED UP!

SHE IS ACCORDING TO THIS, SHE'S AS MUCH A *PATIENT* NOW AS YOU ARE, MENZ
NO! I'M THE *VICTIM!* YOU MEDDLING *BITCH!*
IF YOU TWO WANT TO FIGHT OVER ME, WOULD YOU MIND *MUD-WRESTLING?*
I THINK IT'S TIME YOU WERE SHUT UP FOR GOOD
BUT WHAT CAN YOU DO? IF YOU KILL ME, *YOU* CEASE TO EXIST
IT'S TRUE, MENZ WE CAN'T SURVIVE *WITHOUT* THEM WHAT SHALL WE *DO?*
THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT, ALLOWING YOUR MADNESS TO MANIFEST ITSELF!


I'LL MAKE YOU SUFFER FOR THIS. I'VE BEEN SAVING MY DEATH MACHINE FOR SUCH A MOMENT!
DO YOUR WORST YOU HYPOCRATIC HARLOT!
I'LL TAKE YOU WITH ME!
THEY'LL KILL EACH OTHER THIS TIME, AND KILL US TOO. THIS IS GOING TO REQUIRE BACKUP
IS THE PORTAL STILL OPEN? WE NEED ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET
MENZ USES THE DIRECTIONAL FINDER TO REACH BACK INTO THE PORTAL
OW! THIS IS WORSE THAN STEP-CLASSES!
HURRY, MENZ! THERE'S NOT MUCH TIME LEFT!

OKAY, BOYS. YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO
THEY CAN'T STAY HERE IN THE HOSPITAL IF THERE'S NO HOSPITAL LEFT TO STAY IN
How did I ever get suckered into this?
ALL PERSONNEL MUST VACATE THE PREMISES IMMEDIATELY!
YOU NEVER SAW MY LIPS MOVE, DID YOU?

I THOUGHT THEY WANTED ME FOR MY BRAINS. I FEEL SO USED.
LETS TURN THIS PLACE INSIDE OUT.
DON'T LIGHT THOSE UNTIL WE'RE CLEAR, DRIPS
HEY, I'M INSIDE OUT, NOT STUPID.
THEY CAN'T LAST MUCH LONGER, MENZ

STAND BACK JAZ THERE MAY BE DEBRIS
BOOF!
GOODNESS! THAT WAS ENOUGH TO SEXUALLY AROUSE AN ELDERLY CANADIAN!

THE PATIENTS ARE FREED. RELEASED FROM CONFINEMENT, MADNESS TAKES A STROLL.
WHERE... AM... I...?
WHO... ARE... YOU?
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED. WELL DONE, EVERYONE! NO, SQUID-BABY, IT'LL STUNT YOUR GROWTHS.
THERE THEY GO, JAZ, FREE TO MINGLE IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD, THEIR PASTS WIPED AWAY. A FRESH START.
THERE WE GO, YOU MEAN.
ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO BE REUNITED WITH YOUR BODY?
I DON'T THINK SO. SHE CAN HANDLE HERSELF.

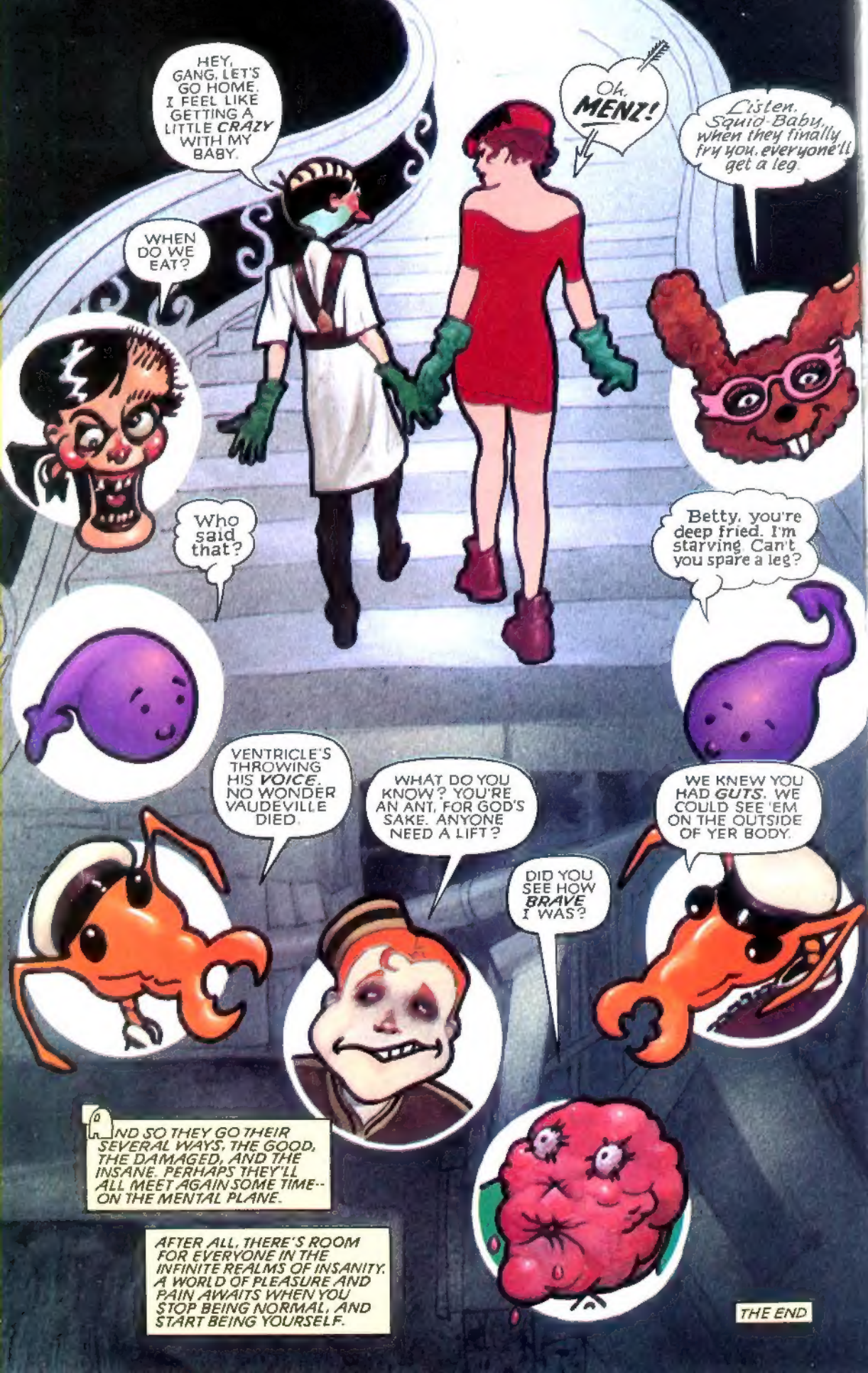

HEY, GANG, LET'S GO HOME. I FEEL LIKE GETTING A LITTLE CRAZY WITH MY BABY.
Oh, MENZ!
Listen, Squid-Baby, when they finally fry you, everyone'll get a leg.
WHEN DO WE EAT?
Who said that?
Betty, you're deep fried. I'm starving. Can't you spare a leg?
VENTRICLE'S THROWING HIS VOICE. NO WONDER VAUDEVILLE DIED.
WHAT DO YOU KNOW? YOU'RE AN ANT, FOR GOD'S SAKE. ANYONE NEED A LIFT?
DID YOU SEE HOW BRAVE I WAS?
WE KNEW YOU HAD GUTS. WE COULD SEE 'EM ON THE OUTSIDE OF YER BODY.
AND SO THEY GO THEIR SEVERAL WAYS, THE GOOD, THE DAMAGED, AND THE INSANE. PERHAPS THEY'LL ALL MEET AGAIN SOME TIME-- ON THE MENTAL PLANE.
AFTER ALL, THERE'S ROOM FOR EVERYONE IN THE INFINITE REALMS OF INSANITY. A WORLD OF PLEASURE AND PAIN AWAITS WHEN YOU STOP BEING NORMAL, AND START BEING YOURSELF.
THE END

Photo ©1997 Seamus A. Ryan

CHRISTOPHER FOWLER leads a double life. By day he runs London's terminally hip Soho movie marketing company, The Creative Partnership, writing for hypertense film stars and half-crazed directors. By night, he writes horror novels laced with black comedy. His latest, *Disturbia*, is his 18th published book, and, although he has reached best-seller status in Europe, he remains "cult" (i.e., unread) in the USA, having been warned that he is "too much of an acquired taste for mainstream America." His novels include *Roofworld*, *Rune*, *Darkest Day*, *Spanky*, numerous screenplays and six collections of short stories.

A lifelong comics fan whose formative years were greatly affected by the October 1962 issue of *Superman* ("Not a hoax...Not a dream, but REAL"), he agreed to write for VERTIGO after editor Shelly Roeberg proved she knew the way to a man's heart by wooing him with boxes of free comics.

He teamed up with John Bolton for this tale of insanity and the pursuit of happiness because "John serves better chocolate biscuits with his tea than most artists." Christopher's aim was to provide John with images that would allow his incredible imagination to thrive. "That and the biscuits." He does not have his own fan club.

JOHN BOLTON spends his days locked inside his eerie prop-and-dead-bug-filled studio in North London. After receiving his diploma in illustration and design, he contributed to all kinds of famous (and infamous) British magazines, and was subsequently commissioned to produce covers and artwork for book publishers. He began working in comics, making an early impact on the US market in 1980. An award-winning artist who has worked on graphic novels and Prestige format comic books with Neil Gaiman, Jamie Delano, Clive Barker, Sam Raimi, Anne Rice and others, he has handled assignments for every major publisher in the comics field.

Photo ©1997 Seamus A. Ryan

John's ethereal vampire-women and magical creatures have made his work much sought-after by collectors. His interest in the stylish and bizarre elements of the horror/fantasy genres is evident throughout his work. His cover artwork features some of the most recognizable and distinctive designs in comic-book history.

He chose to work with Christopher because "he lives round the corner and always leaves me the last chocolate biscuit." He has his own international fan club and magazine.

Pop your cork? Lose your cool? Blow your mind?

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Meet Menz and Jaz: He's part Mad Hatter and part Mary Poppins. She's part Barbarella and part Vargas girl. Together they travel the chameleon-like landscape of the Mental Plane–a riotous parallel reality where the minds of the mentally fractured meet. Despite constant distractions by fellow residents such as the arrogant Cowhead, Betty the Deep-Fried Rabbit and the ever-adorable Squid Baby, Menz and Jaz are consumed by two questions: Where are their Earthbound bodies, and what made them go mad in the first place? Through interlinked short stories ranging from black comedy and sitcom satire to contemporary horror, the answers to these questions and more unfold, and may alter the relationship between Menz and Jaz...forever.

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